1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

197 vocabulary, so much so that my Petats servant, a man of rather over the average of local intelligence, was unable at first to understand it, and carried on his converse with the Kurtatchi people in pidgin-English. He picked it up, however, in the course of a short time. This dialect is spoken also in the villages of Baniu and Timputs, farther along the coast of Bougainville to the east, and in one hamlet of Tabut, the next village on the west. The other hamlets of Tabut, the villages between Tabut and Buka Passage, and the village of Rufi, about four miles from Kurtatchi on its eastern side, speak dialects much more closely resembling those of the east coast of Buka, particularly that of the Hanahan district. The Hanahan dialect seems to be at least partially intelligible to many, if not most, of the people of the North Bougainville coast, and is used by the Roman Catholic Mission for their services.

The small amount of linguistic evidence available as regards the dialect spoken in the Kunua mountain district suggests that it belongs to a separate group altogether. Mr. Ray thinks that it may be regarded as Papuan. It is completely unintelligible to the coast natives, as are the coastal dialects to the Kunua people. [648] Failure to comprehend each other's speech has probably always been an important factor in the attitude of hostility, now subsided into thinly veiled suspicion, which is traditional between the coast dwellers and the people of the central mountains, who, when investigated, will, I feel sure, prove to differ in many important cultural respects from the people described in the present volume, although they associate with them in certain matters, notably in the boys' puberty ceremonies.

197 With this exception, the linguistic differences are not sufficient 621 to prove a bar to inter-communication between the various villages, though a closer connexion is maintained between villages speaking similar dialects. The custom of taking wives from outside the [582] home village links them together, especially as a married couple [591] will frequently reside now in one, now in the other, of their 604 respective homes, and the children will be sent to stay for long periods in the household of their mother's brother. Communication between villages is also established by means of meetings for [438] barter, which is carried on even where relations are not otherwise especially friendly.

484 Considering the difficulty of travel, which must all be done either 621 on foot or by canoe, the natives range over quite a large area. For

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

614 773 but the kind of bird is not specified, and this particular version omits the statement that all the people are descended from the sons of the old woman, so it provides no clue as to the ideas held about the original relation of the people to the birds whose names they have given to their clans.

At Saposa I obtained a version of the myth which differs from the others in passing briefly over the incidents connected with the monster, which figure largely in all the rest, but giving in detail the [115] origin of the clans from the children born to the old woman. I got it from two very old women, Temin and Bo'in. They told it, with endless repetitions and digressions, throughout the whole of a long day, in snatches, with intervals for rest, for they were very feeble and quickly became tired. It was like listening to the recital of an epic. Even through the quavering whimper of extreme age, one felt that the speakers were telling what was to them no mere tale, but a recital of truths that went to the very roots of the life of their people. The portion of the story that is relevant to the subject under discussion is here given in somewhat abbreviated form, as the disconnected way in which it was told makes it hard to follow in literal translation.

The old woman is here called Morena. The first part of the story, as told in other places, how all the people ran away from the monster and left her alone, was omitted; it begins at the point where Morena wished to put an end to the pig who had frightened away the rest of the people and threatened to eat her.

582 614 773 She said: 'There is no one to give me a child, I think I had better try with a banana.' So she took two bananas and copulated with them. Then she became pregnant, and the first child to be born was a girl. 'Ah, that is no use.' So she copulated again with bananas, and became pregnant again, and another child was born, this time it was a boy. 'That 's all right, presently the pig will be killed.' She copulated again, and bore another girl, so now she had two girls. She said to them: 'You must be the wives of my son.' So her two children copulated, and the girl bore a child. Then Morena said: 'These are your clans. One of you belongs to Nakarib, one of you belongs to Naboin, and as for your children, they belong to Nakas.' Now at first there were no other clans, they came later. The boy who was Naboin copulated with the girl who was Nakarib, the girl bore a female child who was Nakas. Now Morena forbade the child Nakas to copulate with Naboin, because he was her father. So Morena copulated again with a banana, but the child she bore was a girl, she called her Nagai. Again she copulated, and bore

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

a male child, Konofats. He married the girl Nagai. Morena copulated again with a banana, and bore a male child, Faŋanif. She told Faŋanif to marry the girl Nakas.[1] She copulated once more, a Naboin girl was born, and later another boy, Faŋanif, who married the Naboin girl. Then she said: 'That is enough now. Now you must not marry back into your own clan. All the Nakarib people are kinsmen, all the Naboin people are kinsmen. If a Nakarib man likes a Naboin woman, he must bring payment, then he can take her. But if one of you takes a woman belonging to his own clan, then you must kill him.'

The story goes on to tell, at great length, how Morena made the land for them, and gave them all their several portions of it, and taught them how to get food for themselves, and all kinds of crafts. Finally, she gave each of the clans a bird: to Nakarib *katoi'ian* (hawk), to Naboin *mānu* (eagle), to Nakas *kavkavkuk* (a bird with white feathers on its neck), to Nagai *tʃūtʃio* (hornbill), to Faŋanif *tortʃiriri* (a small bird which lives in thick forest), to Konofats *kūrō* (dove).

At this point the two old women said that was the end of the story. After a while they told another, of how Morena was responsible for putting the man in the moon, but I could not get them back to the subject of the clans, nor find out their relation to the birds that Morena had given them. A version of the same story obtained at Tiop, however, carries it a stage farther. Here the woman is called Topisbi'ē. When enough children have been born, and she has assigned a clan to each of them, she says to them: 'You, Naboin, must not eat the eagle. You, Natchi, must not play too much in the sea. You, Nakahi, must never kill a dog. You, Nawaniu, must not chase the bush-fowl. You, Amara, must not play with the turtles. These things you must tell to all the children who are kin to you.' But on my asking whether the people observed these restrictions at the present time, I was told that they did not.

It seems clear that the people are not thought to be descended from the birds associated with the various clans, and no information obtained from other sources gave any indication of the existence of such a belief. In all discussions the origin of the clans and their association with their totems was referred to this same

[1] At the present time the rule is that a member of any clan may marry a member of any clan except his own. But marriages of people belonging to the same clan occur at Sapoea as well as elsewhere.

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

good for food, rather than because of its association with the clan Naboin. 614 773

Summarizing the conditions obtaining in this area in regard to totemism—if totemism it is to be called—we find the following state of affairs prevailing at the present time: The people are divided into groups each having a certain relationship to a species, animate or inanimate, which is of the same general kind for each group, and a member of one of these totemic groups cannot (except under special circumstances, such as adoption) change his membership. This is the minimum definition of totemism 'in the widest use of the term' as given in *Notes and Queries* (p. 76). But when we come to examine the nature of the 'certain relationship', we find it amounting to little more than the use of the creature's name. The totemic species is not regarded as an ancestor. It is not now treated with reverence or made the subject of any avoidances, though there is some evidence that this may have been the case in the past. I do not think that the breakdown, supposing it to be such, is due to contact with the white man. From the way in which the natives spoke of these things it seemed more likely that it happened long before the influence of the whites began to be felt in this area, and that possibly the bond between the totemic species and the clan associated with it was never very close.

MEMBERSHIP OF CLANS

If questioned, any native will say that a man should marry a woman of a clan other than his own. Since the clans Naboin and Nakarib are by far the most numerous, the majority of marriages take place between these two. Where there are other clans, there does not appear to be, at the present time, any definite system of inter-clan mating, at least, so I was informed, and none is shown in the small amount of genealogical material I collected at Saposa. But my experience of places where clans other than Naboin and Nakarib were well represented is too limited to justify any statement as to whether this was or was not the case in times past. 614 582

Both at Petats and at Kurtatchi, while clan exogamy is the recognized rule, it appears never to have been inviolable. In my genealogies there are repeated instances of men marrying women of their own clan, and these occur not only in the present generation, but as far back as my information extends, i.e. at least two generations ago. Since this goes back to the grand-parental generation of

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

informants now advanced in years, it cannot be the result of a breakdown of the native system due to the influence of white contact. It is considered to be in order if the two parties to such a marriage belong to different villages, as is usually the case, since the custom is for the mate to be sought outside the village. But it occasionally happens that two people of the same clan marry even if they live in the same village, provided they do not belong to any of the prohibited relationships. It is clear that the tie of blood is considered more important than the clan, since the prohibited relationships are not confined to clansmen, as will be shown in a subsequent paragraph.

The children belong to the clan of their mother. To this rule there is no exception, in the ordinary course of affairs. But if a clan is greatly diminished in numbers it may adopt an infant of another clan, with the consent of the clan to which the individual belongs by right of birth. For example, if a Nakanh woman has a child, and the Naboin people wish to adopt it, a man of importance of the Naboin clan makes a feast and gives the child its name. It is then said to belong to the Naboin clan, and can use the Naboin decoration, and, if a boy, frequents the men's house belonging to the Naboin people. The members of his new clan are expected to provide for him in future, and though his mother may continue, if she so desire, to give him food beyond the time of suckling, she is in no way bound to do so. She must not continue to care for him otherwise; this is the duty of the adopting clan, and would be undertaken by the women belonging to the lineage of the man who arranged the transaction and gave the child its name. For example, if the child has yaws, or one of the tropical sores no one ever escapes, the people of his original clan must not tend or wash him, but this must be done by the adopting clan. The adopting clan must also find the wherewithal to provide him with a wife. If a female child is thus adopted, the adopting clan must arrange the marriage. The currency provided by the husband's people is paid to them, but the clan into which she was born is given a little of it, the amount being arranged by mutual consent. When the time comes to make the feast which reciprocates the payment, the clan to which she originally belonged helps the clan which took her over. The adopting clan provides for the marriage of her children, but such children may, if they please, revert to their mother's original clan. Thus Tatum, the mother of Matare, was born into the

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

565 commoners, but in that case their children are not *tsunaun*, and
595 there is no possibility of their acquiring that status either by
611 courtesy or by reason of any ceremonial procedure or by payment. Children by a woman who is *tsunaun* in her own right in another village are given their full meed of honour in that village, even though they may live with their father's people. They receive a measure of recognition in their father's village, but cannot succeed to the headship there. To illustrate by a concrete case: Rus, Pinari's chief wife, to whom he had been betrothed in childhood, was the sister of the *tsunaun* of the village of Ieta, on the southern coast of Buka, across Buka Passage. She had an elder sister, Kiots, whose son, Gerwan, was the next in succession at Ieta, but after his death, Wasē, son of Rus and Pinari, would be *tsunaun* at Ieta. Owing, as Pinari said, to his fear of 'poison', and as other people said, to pressure from his father, who was anxious to keep him among his followers, Wasē decided, on the death of his mother's elder brother, with whom he had been staying, to return and take up his residence at Kurtatchi. Here he was treated with respect as the son of Pinari, but it was explained to me that he was only 'half-*tsunaun*' in that village, and was definitely inferior in position to Kakari, Pinari's 'sister's' son. Pinari pushed him to the fore as much as he could, and did his best to play him against Kakari, whom he covertly disliked. Actually Wasē took quite a prominent part in the affairs of the village, and was to share with Kakari the responsibility for organizing the *watawutʃ* ceremony under Pinari's tuition.

565 A woman who is *tsunaun* may marry a commoner if she likes
582 him, and if he can produce the necessary large amount of cere-
611 monial currency. The children of such a marriage are *tsunaun*; the fact that their father was a commoner makes no difference at all.

565 Although it may easily happen that a *tsunaun* is possessed of
754 special knowledge of some particular kind of magic, this is inci-
789 dental to his position and not essentially connected with it. Magical knowledge is just as often the property of commoners. Sobak, one of the rain-makers of Kurtatchi, is a commoner. Pinari, the *tsunaun tʃan*, took the principal part at the ceremony for planting a new taro garden described in Chapter IX, but at a precisely comparable ceremony performed for a taro garden belonging to Tabut, that role was filled by a commoner. Examples might be multiplied. But those who are *tsunaun* are regarded as specially

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

applies the same relationship term *tsoa-*) and to the children of his father's sister, although he applies to this woman the term *tʃ'ma-* ('mother'). It is also applied to the children of any woman in the ascending generation who stands to the individual in the relationship called *watʃ'itʃ'io* (see no. 9).

This is a taboo relationship. Persons calling each other *pi'an* must not touch each other's hair, must not use paint out of the same dish for painting hair, face, or body, and must not sleep on each other's bed even if unoccupied. The touching of the hair in particular is to be avoided. For this reason, while a person may take a cigarette or a pipe from between the lips of his *pi'an*, he may not take it from the hole in his ear-lobe (a frequent method of carrying such things), or from behind his ear. If these taboos are broken it is thought that a skin disease will break out upon the offender. But *pi'an* may use each other's less personal possessions, such as fishing nets.

If taro is cooked in the house, or a feast made for any member of it, his *pi'an* may not eat any. This rule deprived two small children, Gav and Gaua, of all share in the much-desired taro-and-coco-nut pudding that was made on the many ceremonial occasions observed for Wanias, who is their mother's father's sister's daughter's son.

This taboo never comes to an end. It carries with it a prohibition of marriage, which is not, however, absolutely inviolable, at least, a case came to my notice in which it was broken although under protest. Both families involved in the marriage were *tsumaum*, and such families appear to have, or to allocate to themselves, the right to break customary rules with a degree of impunity denied to commoners. Rusu, wife of Pinari, very much wished her daughters, Pesē and Marotē, to marry two brothers who, though they belonged to another village, stood to the girls in the relation of *pi'an*, their mother being Pinari's cross-cousin, and Pinari therefore their *tsoa-*. The mother of the prospective bridegrooms was against the match, and said to her sons: 'I don't think you ought to marry back your *pi'an*.' But she was overruled, and the marriage took place. In this case one breach of rule was expiated by another breach of the same rule, for these two marriages were compensated for by a union (also arranged by Rusu) between her son Wasē and his *pi'an* Takon, 'sister' (actually ortho-cousin) of the men in question (see Fig. 4). In discussing this question when it arose during the taking of their genealogies,

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

605 Togen and Matarē told me that their marriages were not really
582 in order, but that they agreed because they were afraid of offending
565 Pinari. In spite of this inauspicious beginning, both marriages seem to be turning out reasonably well.

9. *Watʃitʃio* (term used reciprocally).

601 This term is applied by a woman to the children of her cross-cousins on either side of the house, that is to say, the offspring of her mother's brother's children or of her father's sister's children, and by them to her. It will be seen that the reciprocal term applies to people belonging to an upper and a lower generation, and that while the lower generation can be either male or female, in the upper generation the term applies to females only.

604 This is a taboo relationship. The woman of the elder generation
582 may not hold such a child in her arms when it is small, and she
684 must not touch it when it is grown up. She must never eat in its presence. This relationship carries with it a very strong taboo against marriage, which is somewhat striking in view of the fact that two persons standing to each other in this relationship are always of different clans, as will be apparent from the table of kinship terms. I was informed more than once that in the olden days the penalty for extra-marital intercourse between *watʃitʃio*, if discovered, was death for both. Members of the woman's lineage would kill the woman, and members of the man's lineage
[266] would kill the man. The woman was then eaten by the man's lineage-group and the man by the woman's, no retaliation following on either side. At the present time, they say, all that would happen is that the couple would be banished from the village.

601 The term *watʃitʃio* is also used reciprocally between a woman
604 and the child of her husband's sister (i.e. her husband's *wevnē*-).
582 By extension, it also applies to the child of any other individual who stands to her husband in the relationship of *wevnē*-. But this does not carry with it so strong a prohibition against marriage, which, though irregular, is not impossible. Tahol, married to Tsigot, took as her lover Wasē, son of Rusu, Tsigot's *wevnē*- (actually his ortho-cousin). After this affair had twice resulted in pregnancy, Tsigot divorced Tahol, and Wasē married her. In telling me about this all the individuals concerned laid stress on the fact that she was not Wasē's *watʃitʃio tsūn* ('real' or 'true' *watʃitʃio*) or the marriage would never have been countenanced.

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

582
605

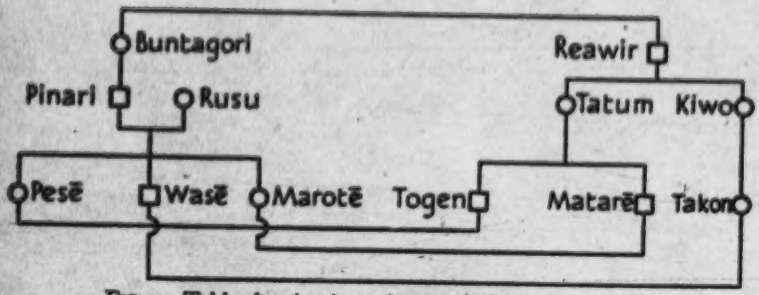

FIG. 4. Table showing irregular marriages between *pi'an*.
Only relevant details shown.

582
604

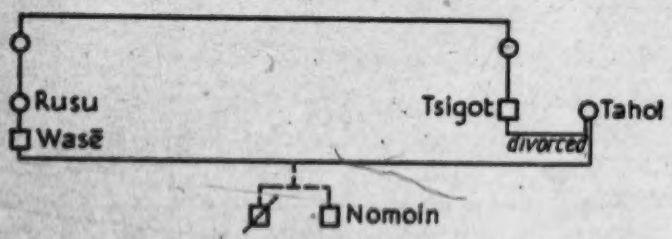

FIG. 5. Table showing irregular marriage between *watfitfio*.
Only relevant details shown.

582
605

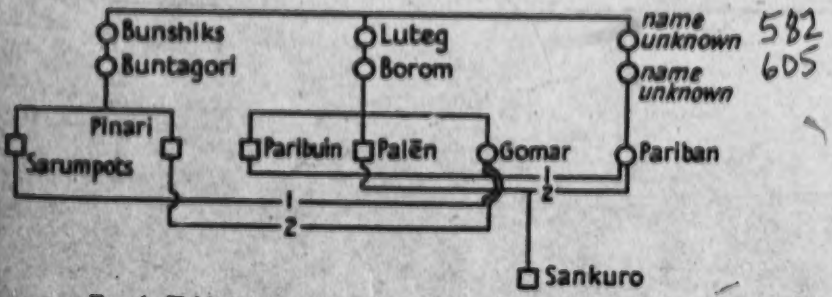

FIG. 6. Table showing irregular marriages between *weonē-*.
Only relevant details shown.

[p. 69]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

persons concerned are of opposite sexes, as in the case of a woman and her husband's father. The son's wife spends a great deal of her time between betrothal and marriage living in the hut of her *ruambi-* and working for them. After marriage the couple may live near them or near the wife's parents, but in the latter case will pay extended visits to her husband's parents at intervals. 606 591

14. *Suwan* (term used reciprocally).

This term is used by both parents of the husband in reference to both parents of his wife, and reciprocally by the parents of the woman in reference to the parents of the man. At the beginning of the young couple's married life the *suwan* relationship is accompanied by certain taboos which are considered only second in importance to those associated with the *waris* relationship. They do not, however, include any prohibition against seeing each other or against addressing each other directly, except that names may not be used, the term *suwan* serving as a form of address. *Suwan* may not touch one another, they may not eat in each other's presence, or even chew areca-nut together. But there is no objection to their sleeping in the same house. 601 606

These restrictions are removed when the wife has her first child, even if it dies. The two mothers prepare food, the two fathers prepare ceremonial pudding, and all four *suwan* eat together, each couple eating what the other couple has prepared, and the taboo is thus lifted. [784]

15. *Taō* (co-wife).

This term is used by one of the wives of a man to refer to, and also sometimes to address, any of his other wives, though there is no restriction on the use of names in addressing one another. No distinction in terminology is made between the first or chief wife, and subsequent wives, but in practice the latter are supposed to give way to the former, though, if they stand high in their husband's favour, they probably will not do so. The man calls his wives *mou* without distinction of priority. 601 595

RELATIONSHIP SYSTEM AND REGULATION OF MARRIAGE

There are no enjoined or preferred marriages in this system. Although the boy may be, and generally is, older than the girl, marriages are, in general, with mates of the same generation. 582●

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

582 [595] (Exceptions to this occur in the case of men who have several wives, their later acquisitions being sometimes much younger than the husbands.) It will be remembered that parallel cousins are classed with siblings, with whom marriage is forbidden, and that cross-cousins (*pi'dn*) are taboo relatives, marriage between whom, though falling short of incest, is viewed with decided disapproval, and this although the individuals belong to different clans. These restrictions, taken together, rule out marriages between all the people who appear in the tables of relationship terms. It follows that a man's wife must be chosen from outside his relations on both sides of the house. As a matter of fact, the more distant extensions of the terms are not always kept in mind, especially if the people concerned live in a far-off village, so that if all the genealogies were followed back for another generation or two, intermarriages would doubtless be brought to light. But these would be incidental, and would not invalidate the system as here described, since the relationships are not considered by the individuals concerned in arranging the marriage. Intermarriages between relatives do occasionally occur, but the amount of care taken to impress upon me that they were irregular, in such examples as I came across, shows that they are never taken as a matter of course. Some of these have already been mentioned. Another, possessing unusual features, is perhaps worth detailing at some length.

582 588 [836] A girl named Pariban fell in love with a young man named Paribuin, and persuaded him to have intercourse with her in the bush. The two were caught, and there was great consternation on the part of their elders, because they stood to each other in the relationship of *wevnē-* owing to the fact that their maternal grandmothers were sisters. Finally they were permitted to marry in spite of this. But the rest of the lineage group were very angry, and in revenge Sarumpots, the grandson of another sister, seized Gomar, the (actual) sister of Paribuin (to whom he stood in exactly the same relation as Paribuin did to Pariban), while she was working in the taro garden, and forced her to have intercourse with him. When it was settled that Parabuin was to be allowed to marry Pariban, Sarumpots married Gomar, but great stress was laid by my informants on the fact that this marriage would not have been possible had it not been for the other. Once these marriages had taken place the matter was considered regularized, and on Parabuin's death without children Pariban duly became the wife of

[839]

[i.e., marriages generally being with mates of the same generation. — Analyst]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

his brother Palēn, who, of course, was also her *wevnē-*. To him she bore a son Sankuro, who was given his rightful position as tsunaun as though his mother's marriage had been perfectly in order. Sankuro is now a boy of sixteen or thereabouts, so that this affair must have taken place upwards of twenty years ago. But from the vividness with which the whole story was related to me, it must have made a great impression on the village. On the death of Sarumpots, the other protagonist in the drama, his wife Gomar, passed in the natural course of events to his brother Pinari, again her *wevnē-*, whose chief wife she now is, having succeeded to that position after the death of his first wife. The unravelling of the relationship terms involved in the genealogy of this family puzzled me very much, until the mystery was cleared up by the recital of the story given above (see Fig. 6).[1] The fact that the relationship was two generations removed took this marriage out of the category of incest. Had the two couples concerned been blood brothers and sisters, it would under no circumstances have been allowed. I heard of no case of actual brother-sister incest, neither does any instance of it occur in any of the stories in my collection.

Incestuous unions are, however, by no means absent. The worst form of incest is between a man and his sister's daughter (the *tsoa-: panu-* relationship). A case of this kind occurred in the village of Kurtatchi some little time before my visit. Wasalau, a man notorious for his sexual laxity, raped his sister's daughter, Poskea, scarcely more than a child. She had a baby, which died at birth. There was a great scandal over the affair. Wasalau was banished from the village by Pinari (who openly regretted that the restrictions imposed by the white man prevented him from putting a spear through him), and will never dare to show his face in it again. Pinari subsequently arranged a marriage for Poskea with the brother of one of his own wives, with whom she now lives, apparently happily.

No case of mother-son incest came within my own experience, but the names of two men, now dead, were given to me as having attempted it without success. It finds a place in my collection of stories, some of which are clearly 'founded on fact', though others are as clearly imaginative or legendary.

Sexual intercourse between father and daughter would appear to occur not infrequently, especially where fully grown daughters, married to men away working as indentured labourers, continue

[1] [See cat. 116 p. 69. —Analyst]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

of a married couple is of more importance than the other, the spouse will take up residence in the village of the partner who has the higher status. In any case, the kindred, as defined above, counts for more than the clan.

The recognized social unit is the lineage, its head is the eldest living male, hence it follows that the person to whom an individual looks as the one officially in authority over him is his mother's eldest living brother. Some lineage groups take precedence of the rest; their members are known as *tunuan*, and the head of such a group is a person of great authority, though now possessing less than in the olden days.

For the reckoning of descent and succession the mother's side of the house is all-important, the father's side completely ignored, i.e. the community is in this respect exclusively matrilineal. But in the case of inheritance of personal property, either in goods or in knowledge, the society is both matrilineal and patrilineal, that is to say, a man can bequeath such property to his son or to his sister's son, or divide it between them, as he pleases.

Throughout the area there are two main clans, but others, smaller in numbers, though not considered as subdivisions, occur: the names and number of these small clans differ in different districts. With each clan is associated some creature, usually, but not always, a bird, but the association now amounts to little more than that of name, though it may once have been more important. The significance of the clan as a social unit seems to have declined considerably with the abolition of warfare.

Marriage is normally exogamous, but exceptions to this rule seem always to have occurred not infrequently. The important thing is to avoid persons with whom direct relationship can be traced either through the mother or through the father, marriages between cousins and the children of cousins being strongly taboo. (This applies to both parallel and cross-cousins.) The bride is preferably obtained from another village.

The relationship system is a 'classificatory' one, comparable with those found in other parts of Melanesia, with strong taboos regulating social intercourse between certain persons. The most important of these are their regulations applying to the wife's mother–daughter's husband relationship, and to that between the parents of husband and the parents of wife. These restrictions are lifted under certain circumstances.

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

836 to me—there were none at Kurtatchi—the unmarried girls indulged in amours as freely as their married contemporaries, but, like them, were desirous of avoiding pregnancy, fearing that they would then be under some difficulty in obtaining a husband later. But in places where there has been little white contact, I incline to think, though the evidence bearing on the point is rather inferential than direct, that pre-marital intercourse is not, and never has been, prevalent among these natives, to any great extent, in respect of either males or females.

882 834 In this area the relations between the sexes before marriage must be considered in the light of two circumstances which have a very definite influence upon them. The first is the elaborate hedge of taboos and restrictions surrounding the boys wearing the *upi*, that is to say, all the boys between the ages of about ten and about eighteen. These regulations are—or were at the time of my visit—still strictly binding, or, if broken, so much care is taken that the delinquents are seldom found out. Their effect is to keep the boys completely away from the women and girls, from which it follows that sexual advances are forbidden. One or two cases were reported to me of boys indulging in sexual intercourse while still wearing the *upi*, but they were spoken of with bated breath, and clearly considered very great enormities and quite exceptional. [684] This, I believe, indicates the actual position and was not merely the statement of the conventional standpoint. In the olden days, discovery would have been punished with death for both parties.

582 [164] The second factor to be considered is that boys, and more especially girls, are generally betrothed while still quite small children. I was told of girls who had been betrothed 'before they had yaws', which indicates that they were hardly more than a year old, since this tropical skin disease falls to the lot of practically 584 every child about the age of one or two years. My informants told me that the match was generally arranged by the boy's father, but in practice I found that it was just as likely to be the boy's mother's brother who took the initiative, and that other people also might, and often did, take a hand in the matter. One day, while I was visiting the village of Tabut, a man from Ruri came over to see if he could get a certain young woman as a wife for his sister's son. He was prepared to give two strings of *imun* and some *beroan*, the amount of which he did not state. She was married to a man who is working at Timputs, but he said the man had divorced her,

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

though he did not know why. Her relatives would not consent to the match, they said her husband might want her back. As it was near the end of my period of residence, I did not hear whether anything further was done in the matter. In another case, in which all the principals were personally known to me, that of Kakari's marriage to Muben, the match was suggested by Muben's *tsoa* (actually the mother's mother's sister's son, but equivalent to the mother's brother). He lived at Kurtatchi, but actually belonged to Baniu, where Muben's mother lived. He was very ambitious, and clearly wanted the marriage because it allied him to the most important family in the district. That is to say, while the initiative usually rests with the boy's family, it may, on occasion, be taken by some relative of the bride's. Again, Pinari, who liked to exercise his authority, saw to it that he had a say in the case of betrothals of any of the young people in his village, even of those not closely related to him, and as he was *tsunaun tʃan*, deference was paid to his views.

The betrothal is not absolutely binding until the ceremonial currency has been handed over by the boy's people. This may be done while the girl is still quite small, but it is not necessary, or usual, to do so until her breasts begin to develop. Once arranged, a betrothal is seldom broken, even before the currency has changed hands, and to break it after that is a serious matter. A case came to my notice where a man fell in love with a girl who was already betrothed, and eventually ran away with her. Although the ceremonial exchanges connected with the prospective marriage had not been completed, the affair was regarded as a serious breach of customary rule, but it was finally settled by a payment of ceremonial currency from the lover to the girl's affianced husband. The couple have been living very happily together for several years. They have one child, a boy about a year old, whom both adore. It seems to be a genuine love match, a somewhat rare occurrence among these people.

At the time of betrothal, the boy may be considerably older than the girl, and may have finished his puberty ceremonies and taken off the *upi*, or he may be only slightly older and continue to wear the *upi* for several years subsequently. All except the youngest boys wearing the *upi* at Kurtatchi were already betrothed. The marriage is never consummated till the puberty ceremonies are finished and the *upi* removed, and usually not until the girl has

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

582 [585] 565 582 595

experienced her first menstruation, though there appear to be some exceptions to this latter rule. A youth who is *tsunaun* will have more than one wife assigned to him at an early age. They are called husband and wife from the time of betrothal. Kiram, a lad of fourteen or fifteen, had for his first 'wife' Tagoal, a girl of perhaps ten or twelve (see Pl. 7 *a*). For her the ceremonial currency had been handed over. His second 'wife', Buin, was about seven or eight, and was still spending most of her time with her mother, the currency not having changed hands as yet.

574 584 883

During the years between betrothal and the marriage ceremony, the girl pays long and frequent visits to her husband's people, or may, in some cases, be taken over by them altogether, particularly if her mother is not living. But if the boy still wears the *upi*, they are kept rigorously apart; there is no chance of their getting to know each other at all, and when the time comes for the marriage to be consummated they are still practically strangers. Some girls fret a good deal on their visits to their 'in-laws', others appear to settle down quite happily. As regards the routine of her life, the early betrothal makes little difference to a girl. She works for her husband's people instead of for her own, and looks after his babies, if he is already married, instead of the babies of her mother's family. She is, as a rule, well treated by her prospective mother-in-law, and drops into place with the girls of her own age in the village, who treat her as one of themselves.

BEGINNING OF MARRIED LIFE

591

After the final marriage ceremony, the young couple usually settle down near the husband's people, sometimes actually in his mother's hut, to begin with. Kakari and Muben were still living with Matēv nine months after their marriage, in spite of Matēv's repeated hints that it was time he built a hut for himself in the vacant space next to hers. But sometimes, under pressure from the girl's people, the couple will live in her village, especially if she be a person of importance. There are enough instances of both practices to suggest that it is not correct to describe these natives as either 'matri-' or 'patrilocal', but that there is freedom of choice, with the balance towards the custom of living in the village which was the husband's home before marriage. In either case, they will, in years to come, spend a certain amount of time in the village which was the home of the other partner.

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

593 which her duties and responsibilities were always towards her mother or her mother-in-law, she must now launch out for herself, not only entering into new and often difficult physical relations with a man who is practically a stranger to her, but also assuming the responsibility of providing food for him, of caring for their home, and, probably very soon, of bearing him a child. This great change in her circumstances may take place soon after, or in some cases even shortly before, her arrival at physiological maturity, or it may be delayed for some time.

797 871 177 882 582 The establishment of Mission schools is tending to alter the prospects of the adolescent girl in places within their sphere of influence. The possibility is now open to her of attending boarding-school, and thus of postponing for several years her marriage and, in the case of the younger girls, her betrothal. She is just beginning to assert her right to accept or reject the advances of her suitors, instead of passively acquiescing in a match arranged by her parents. At Petats there were several unmarried adolescent girls. One even announced her intention to remain so, saying that she preferred her freedom. But the point of view of the majority was probably better represented by the girl who said that she didn't want to stay single and have all sorts of things said about her. If occasion arises, the young people may even go so far as to question the authority of the taboo forbidding marriage with certain classificatory relatives. One couple, whom I knew, proposed, to the horror of their parents, to marry in spite of the fact that they stood to each other in the relationship of *mataha* ('brother and sister') since their grandmothers were sisters. In the end, however, the opposition was too strong for them, and the affair was broken off.

797 177 582 It is evident that the whole system of betrothal and marriage will eventually disappear, and be replaced, under the tuition of the missions, by something approximating to our own, involving the break-down of much of the native social structure. Whether they will make more of a success of marriage under these conditions than we do, or than they do under their own system, remains to be seen. On the face of it, and in view of the evidence cited in the Chapter III, there seems reason to think that the early part of married life, at any rate, would be made happier by the change. But it is hard to foretell what effect a radical change such as this is going to have on the life of a primitive community.

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

881 292 mother's hut. Nawi's mother allowed me to keep one of them (see Pl. 75).

FINAL PART OF CEREMONY FOR MUBEN

881 582 It sometimes happens that a girl is married, and actually sleeps with her husband, before the onset of her first menstrual period. This was the case with Muben, wife of Kakari, whose marriage took place just prior to my period of residence. Her first flux occurred shortly afterwards. As soon as her mother heard of it, she sent for Muben to return to her own village of Baniu for the banana-palm ceremony. Unfortunately, this was over before I 574 went to Kurtatchi. But during the first few days of my stay, several of the women of Kurtatchi went to Baniu to bring her back after the conclusion of the ceremony, and on this trip I accompanied them. The final dance took place on the evening of our arrival. When we reached the village, all the men were busy making ceremonial pudding for us. The bride was dressed in a belt of cane, 292 three white strands and three red ones, from which a bunch of leaves depended in front. She wore no loin-cloth. Another girl, who looked slightly younger, was similarly attired. She was undergoing the ceremony for her first menstruation with Muben, who was of the same clan, but in her case it was not accompanied by marriage.

I was invited to sit on the women's verandah of the hut belonging to the bride's mother. For a long time nothing happened. We passed the time by munching taro and playing at cat's cradles. Long after dark, the sound of Pan-pipes and *mabu* was heard on the other side of the house. Nobody moved. They told me that the men and boys had it all to themselves at first, and that they would come and fetch us afterwards.

881 292 Presently the two girls concerned went into the hut and were made ready by their mothers, helped by their mothers' sisters. When they came out, a little procession was formed, the men and boys with their instruments in front, the two girls following, and then all the rest of the women and children. The two girls had long bunches of leaves stuck into their cane girdles, they wore the usual woman's hood on their heads, but into the tops of the hoods there were stuck white feathers from the tail of the hornbill. Round their waists was a cord from which hung a rattle made of shell. 302 A long streak of white outlined each temple and the forehead.

171
694
616

the animal world do not exist: they are taken solely from the bird world.

Since children inherit their mother's clan symbol, it follows that, if they are girls, they belong to a clan whose members the father can marry and can theoretically be married by him. In practice we find [582 ● this in Buka and northern Bougainville; there it is not rare that the 835] father is married to his own daughter and has children by her. This is not regarded as forbidden; but a union of two people who have the same clan symbol is considered a crime. In southern Bougainville and on the islands of the Bougainville Strait the very same view prevails, but its practice is not so general as in the north. A similar arrangement probably also exists in the other Solomon Islands. I conclude this from a statement of Woodford in his book Among the head-hunters, p. 40 ff. It says there: "It came to my knowledge that an extensive and widespread system of 'castes' or totems exists upon this and some of the adjacent islands. The name of them on Guadalcanar and upon Gela or Florida is Kema, upon Savo Ravu. At Veisali, at the west end of Guadalcanar, the word used is Kua . . . . The natives told me that man might not marry a woman belonging to his own caste . . . . [7] Of these castes the largest and most powerful is the Gambata." He then also mentions the castes Kiki, Lakoli, Kakau, and Tanakindi.

583

The native acquires wives in various ways. In part he steals them from a neighboring tribe and marries them if the clan symbol allows it; if not, he sells the stolen woman to a native whose symbol allows him to marry her. In by far the most cases, however, he barters for his wife. As medium of exchange he makes use of the current money varieties. In Buka a wife costs from four to six fathoms of white shell money (héruanne) or two to four lengths of tooth money (baîfu and rāki). On the islands of the Bougainville Strait a wife costs from five to ten fathoms of white shell money (pālassale) or one to two fathoms of red shell money (mismis). On the mainland of south Bougainville the same two types of money are used as media of exchange, but in addition one called mānei, which is made on Shortland and serves especially for the trade dealings of the islanders with the mountain people. The latter uses as a medium of exchange exclusively the mānei imported from the Shortland Islands; they call it aputa. This money has substantially less value; one needs twenty to thirty fathoms

436
583
171

a respectful distance. After the feast has ended the parents of the Matasesẽn give the Marau presents consisting of two or three strings of biruan, spears, bows, arrows and other effects. At the festival place the hassebou are [12] taken off the youths and burned, and there likewise the long locks of the Matasesẽn are cut off, but then tied up in leaves in a bundle and kept in their huts. As a rule one long lock is left on the nape, which is decorated at the end with beads or a shell. After the haircutting the Marau take their Matasesẽn back into their home villages, and this in turn is again the occasion for further festivities. When they come back a tall post or mast is erected on an open spot in the village; this mast, which is decorated with foliage and painted, is climbed by a Marau. From the top he calls the Matasesẽn by the names by which they are to be known in the future; the old name is forgotten. This mast is called kukun a solo; after the name giving it is removed, chopped up, and burned. After the rukruk festivity has been completed, the Matasesẽn can choose a wife. They are considered adults and take part in all festivities of the men. A comparison of the rukruk of the Solomon Islanders with the dukduk of the Gazelle Peninsula forces itself spontaneously upon one. It is not only the name that leads to such a comparison. In the dukduk a special festival place, the tareiu, is set aside for the participants, as in the rukruk the talohu--two words which, in view of the otherwise very different languages, have the greatest similarity. The exclusion of women from all festivities at the festival place is common to both and likewise the pretense that the participants commune with spirits at the festival place. The female spirit Ruk a tzon [sic] corresponds to Tubuvan of dukduk, who is conceived as female; the male spirit Ruk a tahol corresponds to the male dukduk. The frightening of women -- in Bougainville by the Matasesẽn and in Buka by the Kokorra--and the appropriation of the objects thrown away by the frightened women is the same in both places, and likewise the slaying of women if they accidentally discover any of the secrets of rukruk and dukduk. The burning of the hassebou and the burning of the garments and masks used in dukduk is a further common characteristic. If we were better acquainted with rukruk, then far more similarities could probably be found. It is easily comprehensible that different characteristics developed in the course of time among the two tribes as a result of their isolation from each other. The inhabitants of the Gazelle Peninsula, who to a far greater extent than the Solomon Islanders have the need

796 [302] [553] [582] [825] 796 171